

Éva Gábor

THE TRADITION OF CENTRAL EUROPEAN LIBERAL PHILOSOPHY

Summary

My study comprises the research period between June 1992 and May 1994. I made the research work mainly in Hungary and partly abroad.

A/ The introduction of my study consists of the parallel short biographies and careers of Karl Mannheim and Michael Polanyi. In this part I looked for an answer to the question what role the East-Central European social-cultural milieu, the political-intellectual atmosphere of the region and of the Hungarian society at the turn of the century had played in turning the attention of both Mannheim and Polanyi towards classical liberalism and in committing them to liberal values.

B/ I continue with scrutinising the motives of their choosing a self-imposed exile in Western-Europe, the ways and means of their adaptation to the new intellectual environment. I discuss whether it was: a/ the social-political state of development of the receiving country, b/ its intellectual atmosphere, the state of development of science there, or c/ the cultural niveau, which proved to be decisive.

C/ How do both of them react to the new situation, to the break in their career and to losing their homes? By what is their choice, their mentality, their interest motivated? What new shape do their results get in their newly chosen country?

D/ In the following part of my final report I concentrate on only one topic: in the forming of Mannheim's social philosophy and his theory of planning during his stay in England. What kinds of motivation awakened his interest in planning? To be more concrete: why just "ambition" and "competition" are the phenomena the analysing of which Mannheim wanted to do even before starting the comprehensive explanation of planning? How does he arrive at the idea of planning after having started by analysing this subordinated notion?

E/ How was Mannheim building up his conception of social planning? What is the philosophical heritage that serves as his source? To what extent was Mannheim influenced by German scientific, economic and sociological life? What were the new influences of English thinkers upon him? To what extent did he make use of the Soviet experiences? How does he combine his three sources? Which are the main constituents of his conception of planning? What contradictions showed up in his conception of planning and how can they be explained?

F/ I mention some important opponents criticizing Mannheim's conception of planning giving the essentials of their criticism.

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[Back to Contents](#)